GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4079
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2016
Ticket Booking by Travel Agencies
Tasa Shri Kamakhya Prasad

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has allowed travel agencies to book ticket for public in a limited number;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these travel agencies sell tickets in the black market at a very high price;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to stop black marketing of tickets by travel agencies?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
****

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4079 BY SHRI KAMAKHYA PRASAD TASA TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 10.08.2016 REGARDING TICKET BOOKING BY TRAVEL AGENCIES.

(a) & (b): With a view to facilitate passengers in getting railway tickets, Indian Railways have authorised following ticketing agents:
i. Rail Travellers' Service Agents (RTSAs) to book tickets online (both i and e-tickets) through website of Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).
ii. Yatri Ticket Suvidha Kendra (YTSK) licencee to issue reserved as well as unreserved tickets through computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS)-cum-Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) terminals provided in their offices.
iii. E-ticketing agents authorised by IRCTC to book e-tickets through website of IRCTC.
iv. Jan Sadharan Ticket Booking Sewaks (JTBS) have been engaged to issue unreserved tickets in various parts of important cities.
v. Station Ticket Booking Agent (STBA) have been engaged to issue unreserved tickets from station premises of certain 'E' category stations.

Suitable safeguards have been provided in their respective schemes to prevent irregularity by the agents. With a view to reduce the scope of any misuse, certain restrictions like debarring of agents from booking reserved tickets during first thirty minutes of opening of booking, etc. have also been imposed on the agents authorized to issue reserved tickets.

(c) & (d): Whenever any case of irregularity committed by authorised ticketing agent comes to notice, suitable action as per provisions of the agreement/rule is taken. Such instances generally occur during peak rush period when demand exceeds supply.

(e): The instances of black marketing of tickets are generally reported in case of reserved tickets. With a view to prevent misuse of reservation system by authorised/unauthorised ticketing agents, various steps have been taken by Indian Railways including the following:-
i. Carrying of prescribed original Identity Proof has been made compulsory for one of the passengers while undertaking journey in reserved class.
ii. Refund rules have been revised with a view to deter fictitious booking.
iii. Computerised reservation system has been streamlined by making a provision for automatic preparation of reservation charts at least four hours before the scheduled departure of train and to allow booking of vacant accommodation thereafter till preparation of second reservation charts through internet as well as any computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counter.
iv. In case of online ticket booking, CAPTCHA has been put in place to check booking in batch mode and through Scripting related tools on the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC) website.
v. In case of online ticket booking, only one booking is allowed in one user login session except for return/onward journey between 0800 and 1200 hours.

vi. Agents are debarred from booking of tickets during first thirty minutes of opening of booking i.e. from 0800 to 0830 hours for general booking, 1000 to 1030 hours and 1100 to 1130 hours for Tatkal booking on AC class and Non-AC class respectively.
vii. Joint as well as independent checks are conducted by Commercial, Vigilance & Security Departments at Reservation Offices,

which are supplemented by checks on the train to detect the cases of misuse of reserved tickets.

viii. Misuse of reservation system generally occurs due to gap between demand and supply of reserved accommodations. To meet the additional demand of passengers, especially during festivals and peak rush periods, including Deepawali, Chhat Pooja, Durga Puja, and Eid, special trains are run, carrying capacity of existing trains is augmented, keeping in view the pattern of traffic, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

ix. Surveillance at reservation offices has also been stepped up by installing Close Circuit Television at important PRS locations to keep watch on any possible touting activities. Booking patterns at reservation offices are also monitored for detecting unusual pattern and fraudulent working of touts.

x. General public are also educated through Public Address System and media, not to buy tickets from touts/unscrupulous elements and consequences of buying tickets from these sources.

******